

So try these few (flagrantly unscientific) rules of thumb, collected in the course of my [Michael Pollan's] nutritional odyssey, and see if they don't at least point us in the right direction. --<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/28/magazine>

- 1. Eat food.** Don't eat anything your great-great-grandmother wouldn't recognize as food.
- 2. Avoid even those food products that come bearing health claims.** The American Heart Association charges food makers for their endorsement. Don't take the silence of the yams as a sign that they have nothing valuable to say about health.
- 3. Especially avoid food products containing ingredients that are a) unfamiliar, b) unpronounceable, c) more than 5 in number - or that contain high-fructose corn syrup.** All of them are reliable markers for foods that have been highly processed.
- 4. Get out of the supermarket whenever possible.** What you will find [at the farmer's market] are fresh whole foods picked at the peak of nutritional quality.
- 5. Pay more, eat less.** Americans spend, on average, <10% of their income on food, down from 24% in 1947, and less than the citizens of any other nation. Paying more for food well grown in good soils - whether certified organic or not - will contribute not only to your health (by reducing exposure to pesticides) but also to the health of others who might not themselves be able to afford that sort of food: the people who grow it and the people who live downstream, and downwind, of the farms where it is grown... And, "Hara Hachi Bu": eat until you are 80% full.
- 6. Eat mostly plants, especially leaves.** They're probably really good for you and certainly can't hurt. Thomas Jefferson was on to something when he advised treating meat more as a flavoring than a food.
- 7. Eat more like the French.** Or the Japanese. Or the Italians. Or the Greeks. Pay attention to how a culture eats, as well as to what it eats. Let culture be your guide, not science.
- 8. Cook. And if you can, plant a garden.** The culture of the kitchen, as embodied in those enduring traditions we call cuisines, contains more wisdom about diet and health than you are apt to find in any nutrition journal or journalism.
- 9. Eat like an omnivore.** Biodiversity in the diet means less monoculture in the fields. Diversifying those fields will mean fewer chemicals, healthier soils, healthier plants and animals and, in turn, healthier people. It's all connected, which is another way of saying that your health isn't bordered by your body and that what's good for the soil is probably good for you, too.